

A MESSAGE TO OUR CAREGIVERS ABOUT TDM...

We recognize you, the substitute caregivers of our children, as critical members of the team that will make placement decisions. Team Decision-Making (TDM) will mean that you will be invited to attend any meeting when a child in your care is being considered for a move to another out of home placement or to be reunited with his/her birth family. We feel it is imperative that we hear from you: thoughts, information, and ideas. We know that your commitment to the child's welfare and safety will assist us in making a decision that will best meet the child's needs.

Our TDM meetings may include you as the caregivers, plus parents and their support persons, service providers, community representatives, the child's guardian ad litem and involved members of the agency staff. The child's social worker will schedule a staffing whenever it appears that a decision regarding continued placement in your home needs to be made. We plan to have meetings before a child is moved, so that together, we can make a decision that best meets the child's needs, while always being mindful of safety and protection issues.

If a child is at risk of disrupting from your home, we want to determine if additional supports and/or services to the child or you might stabilize and maintain the placement. We will need your input to make this decision. If the child must move to another placement, we want to have your assistance in ensuring that we have all the information about why a move is needed and how to make the change with as little trauma for the child as possible. We want to see the children in our care experience the minimum number of moves (and ideally, have but a single out of home placement) before they achieve a permanent family placement through reunification or another plan.

When it appears that the child can be reunited with his family, we again need your involvement. We want you to assist the team in determining that the supports the child will need to have a safe and successful reunification are in place. We want to discuss the transition plan for the child, including such issues as school change, medical record transfer, continued contacts with friends and you and your family, etc. We want to hear if you have any concerns or issues that need to be addressed regarding the reunification plan.

We hope that the TDM process will support our children and their families, but also our caregivers. We need to have you continue as our partner in strengthening families and protecting children. Thank you for all you have done and for your assistance in the future.